

Dear Airport Operator:

I am writing you and other operators of public-use airports to make sure you are aware of the potential problems that may occur in some airport systems after December 31, 1999. Specifically, airport systems that use microprocessors may malfunction or produce incorrect information because of a simple date change anomaly. The Year 2000 (Y2K) problem, as it is called, results from the way computer systems store and manipulate dates.

I recognize that some recipients of this letter, especially those that operate smaller general aviation facilities, may not have any systems affected by this problem. However, I believe it is important that all operators assess their systems and determine if they will be affected rather than just assume that it doesn't apply to your airport. I cannot over emphasize the importance of your conducting this assessment regardless of the size of your airport.

I would also like to take this opportunity to advise you of several efforts that are underway in this regard. First, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has done a great deal of work to assess the Y2K problem in its own systems, including any processors in FAA equipment located at airports. Most systems containing microprocessors at airports, however, are owned and operated either by the airport operator or users such as the airlines or fixed-base operators. To ensure that systems continue to function, it is essential that each airport develop an aggressive program to survey and assess airport systems and to correct problems identified.

Because airport users, airport operators, and the FAA all have a stake in the uninterrupted operation of airfield systems, we have formed an Industry-FAA Y2K Airfield Working Group as a forum for the exchange of information on Y2K matters and for coordination between member organizations in efforts to assess and certify airport systems as Y2K compliant. The group includes the FAA, the Airport Council International-North America (ACI-NA), the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE), the Air Transport Association (ATA), the Regional Airline Association (RAA), the National Business Aviation Association (NBAA), and the National Association of State Aviation Officials (NASAO). Member groups have already been active in surveying the status of airport systems and increasing airport and user awareness of Y2K issues.

One of the first accomplishments of the group has been to review the list, compiled by the ATA and ACI-NA, of airport systems that may be affected by Y2K. The FAA revised the list based on comments by the Working Group members, and identified those systems that may affect an airport's certification under 14 CFR Part 139, *Certification and Operations: Land Airports Serving Certain Air Carriers*, or compliance with 14 CFR Part 107, *Airport Security*, or 14 CFR Part 108, *Airplane Operator Security*, or that otherwise relate to operation and maintenance of the airfield and the movement of aircraft. The resulting list is enclosed.

I recognize that most of the items on the list are targeted to airports with air carrier service, but some will also be found on airports serving only general aviation. Even though, not every airport will have every item on the list, and you may find items at your airport that have not been included on the general list, the list should help in your assessment of systems for Y2K compliance at your airport.

Within the next few weeks we will be writing a follow up letter to operators of airports certificated under Part 139 to issue more specific guidance on the assessment of any systems that may affect the airport's ability to meet Part 139 regulatory requirements.

The Working Group is also developing a list of manufacturers of equipment used in airfield systems and containing microprocessors. We are contacting those manufacturers to encourage them to provide an assessment of the Y2K compliance of their products and suggestions for correcting any problems. We are encouraging manufacturers to contact operators of airports where their equipment is installed. In addition, the FAA Airports organization will make the information that we receive on Y2K problems available on our web page at: <http://www.faa.gov/arp/arp-y2k.htm> .

Working Group member organizations are in the process of surveying many of the larger airports for the status of Y2K compliance, and you may already have provided information to one or more of the group members. We invite you to contact the working group members at any time with questions, comments, or identification of any special problems or solutions to problems at your airport. A list of Working Group members and representatives is enclosed.

In the meantime, we urge airport operators, air carriers, and other airport tenants to work closely in identifying the Y2K-affected systems at your airport, to share information, and to cooperate fully in resolving any problems you find. The FAA Office of Airports will provide assistance to you in ensuring that your airport systems are Y2K compliant as soon as possible, so that we may look forward to "business-as-usual" airport operations on January 1, 2000.

I appreciate your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan Kurland". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Susan" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Kurland".

Susan L. Kurland  
Associate Administrator for  
Airports, ARP-1

Enclosure(s)